

Dr. Christine Grady

Christine Grady, R.N., Ph.D



Dr. Christine Grady traces her decision to care for people with HIV/AIDS and her interest in their rights and related ethical issues back to early influences. Her parents took her to civil rights marches at a young age, and those experiences instilled in her a long-lasting sense of social responsibility, she says.

As a nursing and biology student at Georgetown during the 60s and 70s, she joined a grassroots group working for the rights of the mentally ill. In the early 80s, she spent two years at a hospital in Brazil working for Project Hope, an international health organization.

Attracted by the opportunity to be involved in research, Dr. Grady came to the NIH Clinical Center in 1983. In caring for her first AIDS patients, she learned they desired to be recognized as individuals whose thoughts, feelings, and life experiences influenced how they coped with their disease. The testimonials of these patients affected her strongly. Beginning in 1985, Dr. Grady traveled across the country giving seminars to nurses on AIDS patient care. Although some nurses refused to treat people with HIV for fear of catching the disease, Dr. Grady cared for AIDS patients even during her three pregnancies.

Throughout the AIDS epidemic, doctors and nurses have grappled with many ethical issues. Dr. Grady became so interested in these issues that she returned to Georgetown to obtain a Ph.D. in Bioethics. Her Ph.D. thesis, *The Search for an AIDS Vaccine: Ethical Issues in the Development and Testing of a Preventive AIDS Vaccine*, was published as a book. She currently heads the section on human subject research in the NIH Department of Clinical Bioethics.

Transcript of Interview:

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